



## **US Army Corps of Engineers**

Norfolk District

### ***News Release***

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#### **New excavator extends life of Craney Island facility**

A new piece of maintenance equipment is making work easier at the Craney Island Dredged Material Management Area in Portsmouth, Va. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers -- Norfolk District has added a pontoon excavator to Craney Island's stable of equipment to help in the management of the dredged material.

Between three and five million cubic yards of dredged material are pumped into one of three cells at Craney Island each year. One cell is active, receiving dredged material from a large pump, while the other two cells are drying at any given time. The goal is to de-water the cells as quickly as possible to facilitate drying time, which lengthens the life of all the cells.

The water and reusable material is ditched from the active cell by a system of spillways, specially designed weirs and a traditional excavator. However, these methods still leave some material and water in the middle of each cell.

“The pontoon excavator can float in a minimum of four feet of water and is used to excavate dredged material from these inaccessible areas of the cell,” said Denny Copperthite, manager of the Craney Island facility.

The removed material is used to build up roads and levees around the facility. This process of dredging, ditching and building up of roadways and levees is a year-round mission for the staff.

Craney Island, which began operation in the late 1950s, has proven over the years to be a major economic benefit to the Hampton Roads port community. Today, disposal of a cubic yard of dredged material at the facility is far less expensive compared to disposal in other East Coast ports.

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